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READY
Resources for Educating About Deployment and You

GETTING PREPARED, STAYING PREPARED

FRG's Tasks in the Deployment Cycle



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Objectives of FRG Deployment Tasks

- To define the phases of the deployment cycle.
- To identify stresses and Soldier and family issues related to deployment.
- To discuss the role and activities of the FRG in each phase of the deployment cycle.
(based on Army's deployment cycle support directive)

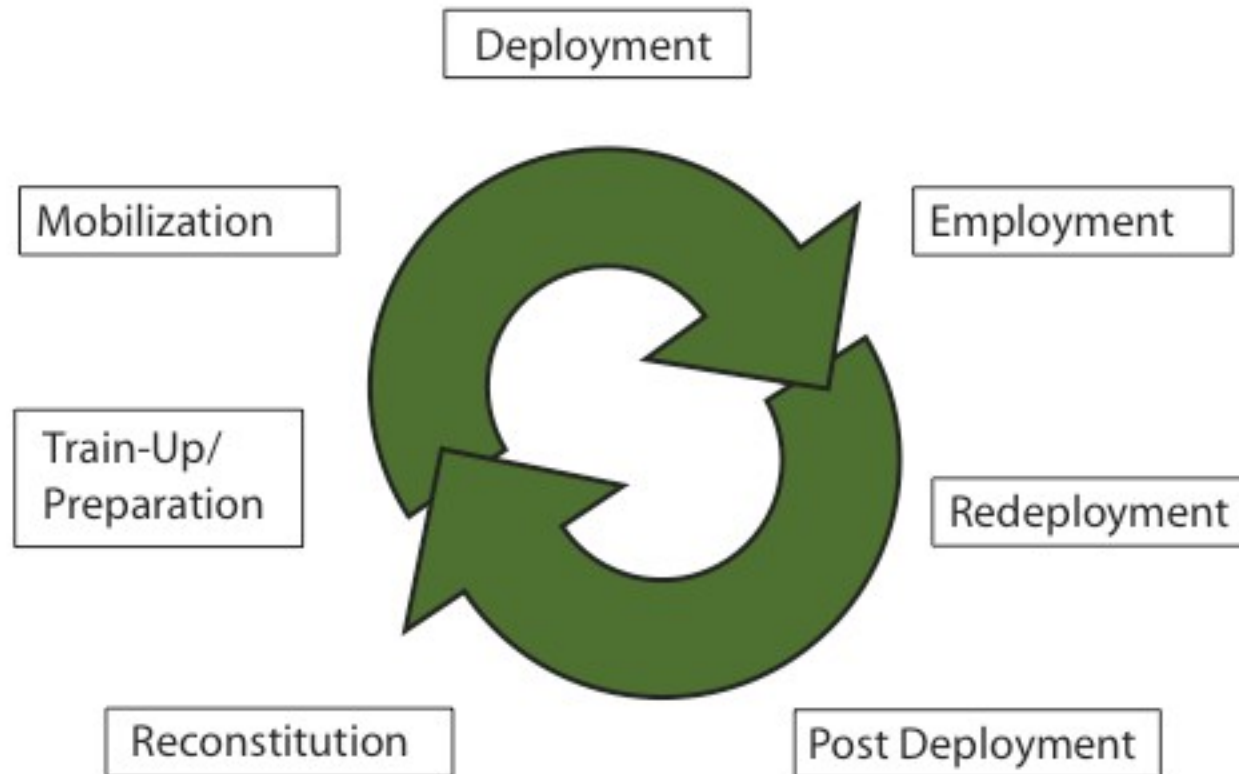


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FRG Supports Deployment Cycle





Train-up/Preparation and Mobilization Phases

- Unit focus is on reestablishing unit, Soldier and family readiness and preparing for next mission
- Brigade Combat Team receives orders
- Soldiers are notified of upcoming mobilization (USAR/ARNG) and deployment.



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Pre-Deployment Stressors

- Anxiety about leaving families; family separation
- Anticipation of combat
- Concerns about family's and Soldier's safety
- Length and level of danger of deployment
- Guard/Reserve concerns about employment/businesses
- Children's care (finding needed childcare, identifying guardian/caregiver)
- Financial concerns
- Arrangements in case of injury or death



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FRG Pre-Deployment Tasks

Assist command with family preparations

(FRG Leader responsibility)

- Meet with company commander and RDC to establish roles and responsibilities.
- Discuss with command processes and procedures for supporting families.
- Recruit and train new FRG leaders and volunteers.
- Get information from command on unit pre-deployment activities (e.g., SRP, pre-deployment briefings) and attend pre-deployment briefings.
- Identify family issues of concern to command.
- Assist in getting volunteers trained for Battalion Care Teams.



FRG Pre-Deployment Tasks (continued)

Ensure FRG readiness (FRG Leader responsibility)

- Get updated roster information and make sure FRG phone tree current and active.
- Ensure key callers prepared and know community resources.
- Network with community agencies
- Collect informational materials for families from unit or agencies.

Note: *Pre-deployment is not the time to set up an FRG! Like the unit, the FRG needs to be ready to assist at a moment's notice.*



FRG Pre-Deployment Tasks (continued)

Get Soldiers FRG readiness and families ready for deployment

- Disseminate information and encourage families to attend pre-deployment briefings
- Ensure families understand casualty notification procedures
- Notify Soldiers and families about FRG
- Encourage Soldiers and families to provide contact information
- Ensure families can access unit's vFRG web system
- Distribute information on military and community resources and Military One Source
- Ensure families have contact information for unit and FRG
- Have families identify issues of concern and notify command or provide information and referral



Deployment and Employment Phases

- Individuals or units leave for assigned mission to a CONUS or OCONUS location
- Length may be short or long term (e.g., 12 to 18 months)
- During deployment, individuals or small groups may deploy to replace Soldiers in theatre
- Unit focus is on helping families cope with stresses of separation and deployment



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Deployment Stressors

- Type of mission and conditions in deployment area
- Uncertainty about length of deployment/Soldier's return date
- Dealing with lengthy absence of a spouse and parent; Handling loneliness
- Coping with ups and downs of emotions, emotional toll of lengthy separation
- Intense concern and worrying about Soldier's well-being
- Potential for and incidents of Soldier injuries and death
- Gossip and rumors as well as 24 hour news



Deployment Stressors (continued)

- Communication with Soldier
- Managing household affairs and change in family responsibilities
- Children's reactions and helping children cope
- Financial impact (especially if income declines and expenses increase) and managing finances
- Learning about available resources and navigating military system



FRG Deployment and Employment Tasks

Assist command with family communications

(FRG Leader responsibility)

- Maintain communication with RDC to get information to be relayed to families and get approval when necessary (e.g., FRG newsletters).
- Identify family issues of concern to command.
- Discuss family problems/issues and how to assist families.



FRG Deployment and Employment Tasks

Maintain communication with families

- Disseminate information from command.
- Provide information on available educational materials, programs and resources helpful to families.
- Encourage families to attend social and educational programs by FRG and others.
- Facilitate communication between families and Soldiers.
- Refer families to appropriate resources as needed.
- Manage gossip and rumors.
- Identify and monitor family issues to inform command and to determine focus of FRG activities.

Note: *Keeping information flowing between command, FRG, community resources, and families is very important for family support!*



Redeployment

- Soldiers out process in theatre
- Soldiers start receiving reunion briefings while still in theater
- Unit focus on preparing Soldiers and families for Soldiers' return



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Redeployment Stressors

Family Stressors

- Fear of Soldier's reaction to changes (family life and roles, spouse employment, children)
- Concerns about adjustments Soldier and family will need to make; Ability of Soldier to reintegrate into family
- Concerns about impact of (combat) deployment on Soldier



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Redeployment Stressors

Soldier Stressors

- Early return due to injury or family problems
- Concern about ability to reintegrate into family
- Concern about ability to change behavior once home
- Impact of combat deployment



FRG Redeployment Tasks

Assist command with reunion preparations (FRG Leader responsibility)

- Meet with RDC to get information about reunion and reintegration trainings conducted by different agencies for families.
- Identify at-risk families or families who experienced problems during deployment to command.



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FRG Redeployment Tasks

Prepare families for reunion

- Provide information on tentative post deployment schedule (i.e., mandatory reintegration training, block leave, etc.).
- Inform families about briefings and trainings available and upcoming homecoming activities.
- Provide educational material and address reunion and reintegration issues in communications with families (e.g., guest speakers at FRG meetings).

Support families of Soldiers on R&R

- Provide families with informational material.
- Maintain connection with families and provide referrals when necessary.

Note: *Family education is important!*



Post Deployment and Reconstitution

- Soldiers return to home station either individually or with unit
- Some Soldiers return only for R&R
- Soldiers begin reintegration into work and family life
- Some Soldiers return to civilian employment
- Soldier and family adjustments occur over many months
- Unit returns to normal mission and routines (reconstitution)
- Unit focus on helping Soldiers and families with reunion and reintegration issues



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Post Deployment Stressors

Family Stressors

- Reintegration of Soldier into family
- Children's reactions
- Dealing with impact of combat deployment on Soldier **and** family members
- Dealing with conflict
- Dealing with ups and downs of emotions
- Anticipation of and anxiety about next deployment (especially deployment to war zone)



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Post Deployment Stressor

Soldier's Stressors

- Dealing with personal impact of combat deployment (range of emotions, thoughts and memories)
- Reintegrating into family
- Reestablishing relationships
- Reestablishing family role (including parenting)
- Adjusting to routines (family and work)
- Returning to work
- Finding a job, if necessary



FRG Post Deployment/Reconstitution Tasks

Assist command with post deployment tasks (FRG Leader responsibility)

- Get information from command about unit reunion activities.
- Identify at-risk families, families who experienced problems during deployment, and family issues to command.
- Identify families with high stress or issues after Soldier's return.



FRG Post Deployment/Reconstitution Tasks

- Encourage families to attend homecoming events.
- Disseminate information about reunion activities and educational programs addressing reunion issues.
- Encourage Soldiers and families to attend programs and use available resources.
- Address reunion issues in FRG communications and activities.
- Maintain connection with families and provide referrals, when necessary.
- Recognize FRG volunteers for their service during the deployment.
- Continue to conduct FRG social activities, meetings, and other activities on a regular basis.
- Conduct a “lessons learned” activity for FRG members.

Note: *Monitoring Soldier and family well-being and providing information and referrals are important to helping Soldiers and families with this transition.*